

BEST AVAILABLE COPY**Reply under 37 CFR 1.116
Expedited Procedure
Technology Center 3700****REMARKS**

By this amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 21, and 29. As a result, claims 1-5, 7-9, 21-23, and 29-37 remain pending in this application. In the Final Office Action, claim 37 is indicated as including allowable subject matter. Applicants thank the Examiner for this indication. With respect to claims 1, 21, and 29, these amendments are being made to facilitate early allowance of the presently claimed subject matter. Applicants do not acquiesce in the correctness of the objections and rejections and reserve the right to pursue the full scope of the subject matter of the original claims in a subsequent patent application that claims priority to the instant application. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicants' undersigned representative during a telephone interview conducted on April 7, 2005. During the telephone interview, the Examiner and Applicants' representative discussed the rejection of claims 1, 21, and 29 with respect to the Japanese Patent Publication No. 5,138,595 (Kiyoshi). No exhibits were presented during the interview, and no agreement was reached as a result of the interview. The content of the telephone interview is incorporated in the following remarks.

Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments presented herein do not introduce new subject matter that would necessitate a new search by the Examiner. To this extent, as indicated in the telephone interview, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner contact Applicants' representative should he feel such a search would be required in order to determine if the issue could be resolved without the issuance of an Advisory Action.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5, 29 and 33-35 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Kiyoshi. Applicants respectfully submit that Kiyoshi

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fails to disclose all the features of, *inter alia*, claims 1 and 29 as required by 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections in view of the following remarks.

With respect to claims 1 and 29, as discussed in the telephone interview, Applicants respectfully submit that Kiyoshi fails to disclose, *inter alia*, the claimed duct including an interior sloped side that partially obstructs a first longitudinal side of a part while allowing a second longitudinal side of the part to pass through unobstructed so that the part exits in a substantially vertical orientation.

In support of its rejection, the Office cites element 20 of Kiyoshi as allegedly disclosing the claimed interior sloped side of the duct. However, as discussed in the telephone interview, element 20 of Kiyoshi clearly obstructs the entirety of any object passing from the opening marked as element 73 by the Office since it extends well beyond the vertical location of the Office's element 73. In response to Applicants' previous arguments, the Office states that "[i]n Kiyoshi..., the part being disconnected from the web has a top and a bottom side. Since the slope side cannot possibl[y] touch both the top and the bottom side at the same time, the not touched side is considered an unobstructed second side." (Final Office Action mailed 4/11/05, Page 8, Paragraph 10).

However, as discussed in the telephone interview, "obstruct" is defined as "(1) to block or fill with obstacles or an obstacle; or (2) to impede, retard, or interfere with; hinder." *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* (from www.dictionary.com). To this extent, both the top side and bottom side of any object in Kiyoshi are obstructed by Kiyoshi's element 20, regardless of which side of the object is actually in

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contact with Kiyoshi's element 20. Further, Applicants have herein amended claims 1 and 29 to more particularly state that a first longitudinal side is obstructed by the claimed interior sloped side while a second longitudinal side is allowed to pass through unobstructed. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

With respect to claims 2-5 and 33-35, Applicants note that the Office relies on its interpretation of Kiyoshi and either claim 1 or 29, from which these claims depend, in support of these rejections. To this extent, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to claims 1 and 29. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

Further, claims 7-9 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kiyoshi in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,628,502 (Amarakoon) further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,451,044 (Nakayama). Applicants note that the Office relies on its interpretation of Kiyoshi and claim 1, from which these claims depend, in support of these rejections. To this extent, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to claim 1. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

Further, claims 21-23 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kiyoshi in view of Amarakoon further in view of Nakayama. With respect to claim 21, as discussed in the telephone interview, Applicants note that the Office presents similar arguments with respect to Kiyoshi and the interior sloped side as presented in rejecting claims 1 and 29. To this extent, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to claims 1 and 29. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of this rejection.

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With respect to claims 22 and 23, Applicants note that the Office relies on its interpretation of Kiyoshi, Amarakoon, Nakayama and claim 21, from which these claims depend, in support of these rejections. To this extent, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to claim 21. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

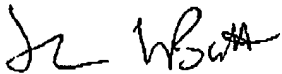
Further, claims 30 and 32 are finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kiyoshi in view of Amarakoon; claim 31 is finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kiyoshi in view of Amarakoon further in view of Nakayama; and claim 36 is finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kiyoshi in view of Jakubik. Applicants note that the Office relies on its interpretation of Kiyoshi and claim 29, from which these claims depend, in support of these rejections. To this extent, Applicants herein incorporate the arguments presented above with respect to claim 29. As a result, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of these rejections.

Applicants submit that each of the pending claims is patentable for one or more additional unique features. Additionally, Applicants do not acquiesce to the Office's combinations of the various references. These features and the appropriateness of the Office's combinations have not been separately addressed herein for brevity. However, Applicants reserve the right to present such arguments in a later response should one be necessary.

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In light of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that all claims are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner require anything further to place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



John W. LaBatt, Reg. No. 48,301
Hoffman, Warnick & D'Alessandro LLC
Three E-Comm Square
Albany, NY 12207
(518) 449-0044 - Telephone
(518) 449-0047 - Facsimile

Dated: April 11, 2005

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